

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

HILARY COOPER

KRIS HOLSTROM

JOAN MAY

December 6, 2017

Submitted via <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings>

RE: Proceeding 17-108

Dear FCC Commissioners,

We are very concerned that at your December 14, 2017, meeting, the FCC will repeal the 2015 regulations that require net neutrality. Net neutrality is the rule that internet service providers can't offer faster speeds and access to websites that pay them more, and thus have classified broadband providers as public utilities under Title II of the Communications Act of 1934.

We are very concerned that the FCC public comment process was compromised, and that nearly 450,000 spambot comments in support of the repeal have been identified, and even fraudulently used the names of unsuspecting Americans. The Washington Post reported that around 400,000 comments in support of the repeal originated from a single address based in Russia and that 7.5 million comments in favor of the repeal appeared to come from just 45,000 distinct email address, quoting Brian Hart of the FCC saying that they were "all generated by a single fake e-mail generator website". It is astounding that of the 22 million comments the FCC received on the rule earlier this year, only 17.4 percent have been found to be authentic by the data analytics company Gravwell. The authentic comments are overwhelmingly in support of retaining net neutrality regulation. In addition, it appears at least 50,000 consumer complaints to the FCC have been disappeared from the FCC's records.

This is a very important decision. Whether or not the net retains neutrality will significantly affect American businesses, government, education and schools, researchers, health services providers and hospitals, social media, and e-commerce. Without net neutrality regulations, broadband companies can charge certain users more and block or slow access to some websites while favoring others. Broadband providers will be able to utilize paid prioritization and unreasonable discrimination rather than treating all internet traffic equally. This could have huge repercussions for local governments that must provide information to citizens, are mandated to have high-speed, secure connections for sensitive data being transmitted from our clerks, treasurers, assessors and during elections. When websites are bundled like cable or satellite TV channels, on what tier, and how accessible and searchable will government, hospitals, schools and public safety be? Our local economy is intertwined with creative entrepreneurs who must use the internet to deliver their products and services.

San Miguel County believes the loss of net neutrality will make the internet more exclusive, expensive and less accessible. San Miguel County already struggles with the broadband divide – there are relatively few broadband providers, and 45 percent of our county lacks access to broadband. With so few providers, if certain content is censored or prohibitively expensive, there will be limited options.

San Miguel County has been working collaboratively with other local governments in the region, the State of Colorado, utilities, and ISPs to expand our broadband infrastructure where it is cost-prohibitive and unattractive for the incumbent monopoly to serve. If taxpayer resources are

being used to push broadband out to rural areas, it should serve all end users equally. We are opposed to the repeal of the net neutrality regulations.

With the rulemaking process and public input completely corrupted, the voices of real citizens, public entities and businesses must be duly considered prior to making a decision.

We respectfully request that the FCC hold public hearings around the country, including in Colorado, to allow in-person public comments to be entered into the record and to be witnessed. A public hearing must be held in Colorado for our voices to be heard.

Sincerely,

SAN MIGUEL COUNTY, COLORADO
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



Joan May, Chair

cc:

Honorable Senator Gardner
354 Russel SOB
Washington, DC 20510
Fax: 202-224-6524

Honorable Congressman Tipton
218 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Fax: 202-226-9669

Honorable Senator Bennet
261 Russell SOB
Washington, DC. 20510
Fax: 202-228-5097

jennifer_loraine@gardner.senate.gov
ann_mccoy-harold@gardner.senate.gov

Jose.Alanis@mail.house.gov
Darlene.Marcus@mail.house.gov
Brian.McCain@mail.house.gov

John_Whitney@bennet.senate.gov